

FN82 Turret update August 2020

August brought a relaxation of the travel and hospitality rules and, therefore, a chance to do a swap of the current turret projects.

I had progressed the FN150 as far as currently possible with just a few missing parts to be found and fitted whenever possible. So I seized the opportunity for it to return to East Kirkby and have the perspex fitted. On a bright, calm day it rolled out of the workshop, through the partly built Anderson Shelter and onto the trailer. There then followed an extended period of adjustment to balance the trailer and secure the turret, after all it would be sad to see all that time and effort go to waste.



The trip across country was steady, if a little slow, as the Ford Fusion isn't really the ideal tow vehicle. We were soon back in bomber country and the spiritual home of the Royal Air Force and not much later settled into the Red Lion at Revesby.

I hadn't expected the level of excitement that we encountered on arrival at East Kirkby and was pleased to find out that both 'Just Jane' and the Mosquito were due to be run during the day. With the FN150 duly handed over, we had a long discussion over the plan for the FN82 and then loaded it onto the trailer with the same attention to detail with the balance. This, of course, took an age due to the frequent breaks to see the ground runs and taxi trips.

It was then back to the Red Lion, with the plan being to pick up the trailer and set off home in the morning.

Upon return the FN82 looked pretty much identical but was, in fact, a fair bit taller with a much higher C of G.



Many will know the FN82 well as it has been fitted to 'Just Jane' for a very long time I suspect. This is how it used to look.



Many hours later the turret was reduced to a turret ring, accommodation floor, side frames and an elevation tube. This assembly will be the first to be restored as then the other assemblies can be restored and built back onto it. There is a specific order in which the parts need to be re-fitted which is laid out in the AP2799Q, Vol 2, Part 3, Chap 5.

The first task with this assembly is to remove several layers of paint and have a good look for cracking and corrosion. Once this is done the turret rings will need to be separated, cleaned, greased and re-built. If anyone out there knows the modern equivalent to 'Grease, Low Temperature, Aircraft – Stores Ref 34A 174' could they let me know please.



The first major horror found was this area of corrosion in the drum and floor assembly. At the very bottom of the turret, this is the area where all debris and dampness collect and is also where the lower armour plates touch the drum. With almost perfect conditions for electrolytic corrosion the inevitable result has been some serious damage in a difficult to repair, double skinned, area.

Luckily, this assembly can be re-fitted quite late on in the restoration so there should be time to come up with a repair plan or consider re-manufacture. To prevent this problem in the future I think it would be best to omit the armour plates and their mountings especially given the lack of German night fighters these days.



Much more difficult to photograph (and repair) is the damage to the underside of the drum. At some point the turret has suffered an impact from below, or possibly been stood on its base. The result is a creased outer skin and the floor has been pushed up about an inch. Furthermore, the leg shields have been pushed up, their rivets have torn and their upper mounting bolts have folded up. In all this assembly is in a very bad way.



But all that can wait. For the time being the emphasis is on the turret rings, accommodation floor and side frames. In the mean time it is worth mentioning that there are quite a few parts missing from the turret and so if anyone has any spare FN82 components , please let me know. I could also do with AP2799Q, Vol 2, Part 3, Chap 6, Paras 768 to 778 if anyone has it. It's only one page but a very important one!

The weather is set poor for a while and so there should be plenty of 'turret time' to be had.